



# ACHIEVING THE GOAL OF ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

## *Specifications*

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Veterans Affairs have adopted specific criteria and benchmarks for ending Veteran homelessness in order to guide communities as they take action to achieve the goal.

The following specifications were designed to help communities measure their progress on the benchmarks and are intended to be used side-by-side with [Achieving the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness: Criteria and Benchmarks](#).

### DATA POINTS USED IN BENCHMARKS:

1. **[Date of identification]** of each homeless Veteran
  - Date of initial contact with a homeless Veteran in any program, including Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Safe Haven, at a VA Medical Center, or at any other point of homeless system entry, including Veterans who are first time homeless and those who may have been homeless previously but exited homelessness at least 90 days prior to the date of identification.
  - In the specific case of Veterans who have previously declined an offer of a permanent housing intervention but who subsequently accept such an offer, the **Date of acceptance** of the offer serves as the **[Date of identification]** for these Veterans.
2. **[Date of move-in to permanent housing destination]**
3. **[Date of move-in to service-intensive TH]**
4. **[Documented offer]** of a permanent housing intervention where the subsidy or rental assistance is immediately available at the time the offer is made, i.e. a Veteran can immediately be issued a voucher or subsidy and begin the housing search process (if the subsidy is not attached to a hard unit). The documented offer should include the following information:
  - Type of permanent housing intervention (e.g. HUD-VASH, RRH, PSH, other subsidy)
  - Date of offer
  - Veteran acceptance/decline of offer

These benchmarks presume that communities have existing data systems and processes for keeping track of Veterans identified as experiencing homelessness, sometimes known as an active or by-name list. **Recommendations for maintaining an active list:**

1. Updates should be conducted at least monthly to ensure information is up to date.
2. In some instances, communities may find that, even after exhaustive efforts, they can no longer locate or contact a Veteran experiencing homelessness who is on the active list. In such cases, it may be appropriate to change the status of that Veteran from “active” to “missing” for purposes of calculating these benchmarks. We recommend changing this status only for Veterans who cannot be located by Outreach staff after repeated attempts for 90 days or more. At that point, if the Veteran is located at a later date and is identified as experiencing homelessness, the date of the most recent contact is used as the **[Date of identification]**.

**BENCHMARK A: Specifications to measure whether chronic homelessness among Veterans has been ended**

<b>Unit of measurement:</b>	Number of chronically homeless Veterans in the CoC's geographic area
<b>Contributing programs:</b>	All projects administering ES, TH, SH, SSVF, HUD-VASH, Street Outreach, and Permanent Housing funded by CoC, local, state, or Federal programs
<b>Recommended data source:</b>	Active list
<b>Target:</b>	Zero chronically homeless Veterans, with the following exemptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exempted Group 1: Those Veterans who have been identified and offered a permanent housing intervention but who have not yet accepted. (Note: Communities are responsible for ensuring that these Veterans are continually engaged and offered permanent housing.)</li> <li>• Exempted Group 2: Those who have accepted a permanent housing intervention but have not yet entered the permanent housing. Note that this group is only exempt for 90 days from the point of identification. If they have not yet entered permanent housing after 90 days, these Veterans are no longer exempt and will be counted for Benchmark A purposes.</li> <li>• Exempted Group 3: Those who had been offered a permanent housing intervention but have chosen to enter a service-intensive transitional housing project prior to entering a permanent housing destination.</li> </ul>

**Benchmark Calculation:**

<div> [Veterans experiencing chronic homelessness not in permanent housing] <div> – [exempted Group 1] – [exempted Group 2] – <u>[exempted Group 3]</u> 0 </div> </div>
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The following conditions must be in place in order to include a Veteran in one of the exempted groups for Benchmark A:

Exempted Group 1:

Frequency of [Documented offer] equals at least biweekly (every 14 days or less)

Exempted Group 2:

[Date on which benchmarks are measured] – [Date of identification] < 90 days

Exempted Group 3:

Date of [Documented offer] is earlier than [Date of move-in to service-intensive TH]

**BENCHMARK B: Specifications to measure whether Veterans have quick access to permanent housing**

<b>Unit of measurement:</b>	Average time from date of identification of homeless Veterans in the CoC's geographic area to date of move-in to a permanent housing destination
<b>Contributing programs:</b>	All projects administering ES, TH, SH, SSVF, HUD-VASH, Street Outreach, and Permanent Housing funded by CoC, local, state, or Federal programs
<b>Recommended data source:</b>	Active list
<b>Target:</b>	<p>&lt; or = 90 days, with the following exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exempted Group 1: Those Veterans who had been identified and offered a permanent housing intervention but had not initially accepted the offer; for these Veterans the average would only include the time from when they accepted the intervention until they moved into housing;</li> <li>• Exempted Group 2: Those who had been offered a permanent housing intervention but have chosen to enter a service-intensive transitional housing project prior to entering a permanent housing destination.</li> </ul>

**Benchmark Calculation:**

$$\left[ \frac{\text{Total number of days for all Veterans from identification to move-in to permanent housing}}{\text{Total \# Veterans}} \right] < \text{or} = 90 \text{ days}^*$$

\*See [Benchmark B description](#) for caveats

The following conditions must be in place in order to include a Veteran in one of the exempted groups for Benchmark B:

Exempted Group 1:

Frequency of [Documented offer] equals at least biweekly (every 14 days or less)

Exempted Group 2:

Date of [Documented offer] is earlier than [Date of move-in to service-intensive TH]

**BENCHMARK C: *Specifications to measure whether the community has sufficient permanent housing capacity***

<b>Unit of measurement:</b>	Ratio of move-ins to permanent housing destination to number of Veterans becoming homeless
<b>Contributing programs:</b>	All projects administering ES, TH, SH, SSVF, HUD-VASH, Street Outreach, and Permanent Housing funded by CoC, local, state, or Federal programs
<b>Recommended data source:</b>	Active list
<b>Target:</b>	Total number of Veterans moving in to permanent housing destinations > Total number of newly identified homeless Veterans within the measurement period
<b>Measurement period:</b>	Continuous 90 day period preceding benchmark measurement, e.g., 9/1/15 – 11/30/15

**BENCHMARK D: *Specifications to measure whether the community is committed to Housing First and provides service-intensive transitional housing to Veterans experiencing homelessness only in limited instances***

<b>Unit of measurement:</b>	Ratio of Veterans entering service-intensive transitional housing to Veterans becoming homeless
<b>Contributing programs:</b>	All projects administering ES, TH, SH, SSVF, HUD-VASH, Street Outreach, and Permanent Housing funded by CoC, local, state, or Federal programs
<b>Recommended data source:</b>	Active list
<b>Target:</b>	Total number of Veterans entering service-intensive transitional housing < Total number of newly identified homeless Veterans within the measurement period
<b>Measurement period:</b>	Continuous 90 day period preceding benchmark measurement, e.g., 9/1/15 – 11/30/15